

EGYPT – IN TURMOIL

Often a commercial pilot will make a sweeping circle over the famous pyramids of Giza before landing at Cairo International airport. As ancient signature of this ancient kingdom reveals, more than seventy pyramids, in splendor and ruins. Hieroglyphics tell the tale and mummification of the Pharaohs, afterlife-an abode to the Gods suggests antiquity and attracts tourists. A sudden uprising against President Mubarak has them scurrying to exits. Current life is about to change.

Appointment of a Vice President with some powers has been superceded by the announcement that President Mubarak-ruler for 30 years-has resigned and has helicoptered to a palace resort at Sharm el-Sheikh bordering on the Sinai with Israel. An overwhelming jubilation and excitement has caught the Egyptians in Tahrir Square, almost fixed and unable to leave. Not exactly, a military Junta, but the Army, highly respected, at Mubarak's request has taken charge, and eased the threat, perhaps, of any further confrontation. The moment suggests that a Democratic aura illuminates. It is said the Muslim Brotherhood, organized, and a long time thorn in the administration's side supports the change, and awaits. Foreign Islamists from elsewhere get little support though their clamor is heard. Is this the start of something big and wonderful or the calm before the storm. Time will tell!

“Revolutions are unpredictable,” argues Ken Pollack, a Middle-East expert at the Brookings Institution. He cites an analogy of the Russian Revolution where the Mensheviks transition was hijacked by the Bolsheviks of Lenin. The former could be the Muslim Brotherhood while the latter could be those in the Pakistan caves, al-Qaeda where much of their extremism comes from the bin-Laden deputy, Ayman Zawahiri's (Egyptian Islamic Jihad), who tried unacceptably to stir up an Egyptian revolution in the nineties. And who would have thought the French middle-class (Bourgeoisie), and the poor would condescend to the bloodbath of the Jacobins over Royalty/others by guillotine.

Egypt bespeaks of the frustration of Churchill when saddled with problems of world consequence; ‘a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.’ Yes! For thirty years, Egypt has endured President Mubarak who believes he speaks for many of the mid-east family moderate and extreme Islam factions, supports Palestine's recognition and statehood aspirations, versus the intransigence of Israel or the other way around, and the peace with Israel, manufactured by the triumvirate of Presidents Carter and Sadat (of Egypt), and Prime-Minister Begin

of Israel in the fall of 1978, together with a stable relationship with the United States despite less democratic signs each day. A Jewish leader who spoke in the Egyptian parliament, and an Egyptian leader who spoke in the Knesset were the highlights of the association. Sadat paid for it when assassinated and Begin died later. Mubarak and Sadat surfaced as military partners of Gamal Abdal Nasser's coup in the fifties. Nasser tried fruitlessly to coordinate Arab nations to speak with one voice, and fight the Jew. So it went.

To many or some we have been faced with a 'War of Civilizations' first suggested by the late Samuel Huntington: extreme Islam versus the rest. Scholars provide the raison d'être: Taymiyya, Wahab, al-Banna, Qutb collectively speak to their followers: al-Qaeda, Taliban, Hamas, and Hizbollah. Islam is a religion, an Ideology, and a Nation who bodes no compromise with Christians, Jews, other religions, and infidels. And argue with the so-called moderates of Jordan, Saudi-Arabia, Emirates and Egypt to change their ways. In simple language, the change will come through militant and military operations (as Muhammed did) or via 'Stealth Jihad'-an infiltration of ideas, customs and sharia into the United States and other decadent Western nations. Evidence suggests it has already begun.

Yet, Egypt portends (if it plays out) something that dwarfs the false Mahdi Islamic Iranian Mullahs whose brutal shut-down of their people's protests resonates.

"Mr. President, (an O'Reilly oversight) do you recognize the aspects of 'pure Islam', its consequences?"